Doubling of rail track in Jammu and Kashmir

113. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the length of the single railway track in the Jammu and Kashmir region;

(b) whether there is any possibility of converting it into a double track; and

(c) if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The length of single line railway track in Jammu & Kashmir as on 31.03 .2007 is 137.77 kilometres.

(b) and (c) The doubling of Jalandhar - Jammu Tawi line, part of which falls in Jammu & Kashmir, is already in progress and complete double line on this route will be available by 2008-09.

Jampacked running of local trains in Mumbai

114. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that local trains in Mumbai have been running jampacked for last several years so much that commuters find it difficult to move in a compartment or get down over a station particularly physically challenged and commuters who are casual visitors to Mumbai;

(b) whether it is also a fact that often there are long queues over ticket counters as a result of which commuters often miss their scheduled trains; and

(c) what are the improvements Government have carried out all these years to address the woes of the commuters?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir. During the peak hours in morning and evening, there is heavy rush. However, special coaches have been earmarked in these trains for the convenience of handicapped persons and lady passengers.

(b) and (c) Booking counters are also crowded during peak rush hours. To address this problem, a number of steps have been taken/ are being taken by Railways, which include provision of additional booking counters, provision of Coupon Validating Machines, provision of computerised Unreserved Ticketing System. Instructions have also been issued to extend Jansadharan Ticket Booking Sevak (JTBS) scheme to Western Railway. Provision of Contactless Smart Card based ticketing system and Automatic Ticket Vending Machines (ATVMs) is also on hand. Improvement in ticketing system is a continuous and ongoing process.

Utilization of railway land

115. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that about 40,000 hectares of land including 5 cinema halls are lying with Railway's unutilized and idle;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard and reasons for not utilizing the same; and

(c) whether there is any proposal for its utilization?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Out of 4.31 lakh hectare of total land holding, railway has about 44,894 hectare of vacant land. Information regarding cinema halls on railway land is being obtained from the Zonal Railways.

(b) and (c) Zone-wise details of vacant railway land is as follows:-

Railway	Vacant land (in hectares)
North Central	738
Western	7383
North Eastern	5923
South Western	2871
Central	2478
East Coast	1355
Northern	2919
North-East Frontier	2435
Southern	2297
South Central	4248
South Eastern	84
West Central	488
North Eastern	5923
East Central	5773
Eastern	1547
South-East Central	3391

The vacant land is required by the Railways for its future development works. However, till such time, the land is required by Railways for its own operational use, the same is put to various short term uses like commercial licensing, plantation, Grow More Food Scheme, etc. In addition, where potential exists, it is proposed to undertake commercial development of land through Rail Land Development Authority (RLDA).

Leasing of railway hotels

116. SHRI P.R. RAJAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry is setting up special purpose vehicle to help its budget hotels; and

(b) whether his Ministry is planning to lease the railway hotels to private parties?